

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, July 26, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel Hubbard to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Letter Siasconcet, Wednesday, July 26th 1876. My dear Alec:

I send with this a letter received last night. I think it so lovely that I want you to see it. Please keep it and return it to me when you come home. Do you see what Mamma says about your telegraph. You know what I think of it, but you do not know what I think of Visible Speech. This has been the one subject which we have both avoided. You do not know how much this has troubled me at times. I feel as if there being anything on which two persons do not agree, it must gradually grow to be as a wall between them. There must be no such thing between us two, and there will not be if we speak openly of it. What I think of it now is that it will be of the greatest value to learners, deaf or hearings. But I think it will be a very long time before it will come into general use. There may be money in it, but you are not the one to get that money, because you love your work and cannot bear to ask pay for that labor of love. I think of the two you are more likely to make something out of telegraph and if you do you will be the better able to carry out your work. So I think not only for more selfish reasons, but for it too it would be better if you made it for the time secondary to telegraph. Please do not think I have a secret, hope or wish of your eventually abandoning Visible Speech or the education of the deaf, because I truly have not and am proudest of you when I remember your words to my father that rather than do the dishonorable thing of giving up V.S. you would resign all hopes of me. And I 2 should despise you if you did so now. All I want you to do is to work away at electricity steadily at present, to try the lines between Brantford and Paris and do your utmost to induce some one to take up your foreign patents and to allow you to go on working. You say you do not like speculation, neither do I, but I feel as though for you V.S. would only bring in enough for your own living, no more and after that what have you to depend on. I should not be

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willing to have you waste your time and talents on some monied drudgery against which your whole nature would rebel.

My darling have I read you a dreadful sermon. I am sorry if I have. Forgive me I meant it for the best. I suppose you will laugh at my poor arguments and pull them all to pieces, as usual, but if there is any truth in what I have said you will think of it I know. Do not think I want you to work all the time. I want you to rest, and to come home well and strong and to your favorite phrase, as brown as a red Indian. I am expecting a good stock of letters full of wild Indians, etc. Only please don't leave all your hair behind you! That is the only condition I make. No I forget. If you number hunting among your accomplishments be sure and bring me home a trophy.

Bathing today was splendid, though I was still much afraid and with little taste for breakers. Gardiner is poisoned on one side of his face. He is a little red fright poor thing.

I am getting so impatient for Canadian letters. I want very much to know how all you friends are and all about them, how you like your new uncle and cousin. You did not forget I hope to give my best wishes to the bride.

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Love to your father and mother and a heart full for yourself dear, here's the carriage and I must go to Nantucket.

Lovingly, Mabel.